ABSTRACT

The use of an anonymous biometric authentication system and method that use biometrics to anonymously authenticate an individual and grant certain privileges based on the anonymous authentication is provided. The system and method permit enrollment of an individual by submission of a first biometric and associated identity documents or credentials to an enrollment authority. The enrollment authority verifies the identity of the identity of the individual submitting the biometric using the credentials which are then returned to the individual or discarded. The first biometric is stored in a database for later retrieval in anonymously authenticating an individual seeking to exercise certain privileges. No other personal identity information is stored along with the biometric during the enrollment process. When an individual later seeks to exercise certain privileges, they must submit a second biometric that is compared to the stored biometrics in the database in order to anonymously authenticate the identity of the individual as having access to such privileges. No other personal information is captured, collected, or solicited during the authentication process. Privileges are granted to an individual based on the comparison of the later captured biometric to the stored biometrics in the database. Alternatively, the anonymous biometric authentication system can be designed to avoid repeat offenders by capturing a biometric of an individual seeking to exercise a privilege and denying the privilege if the captured biometric is matched to a biometric stored in a database containing the biometrics of previous offenders. Preferably, the system and method include capture and storage of a powerful biometric identifier based on the iris of the eye which uniquely identifies the individual that has submitted the biometric. Anonymous biometric authentication allows verification of the identity of an individual seeking certain privileges while at the same time protecting the privacy of personal information about the individual.